This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Mesmerism, Spiritualism,

Witchcraft, and Miracle

by

Allen Putnam

1858

BKH
P98

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Transferred to the
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

1858

Mesmerism, Spiritualism,

WITCHCRAFT, AND MIRACLE:

A Brief Treatise,

SHOWING THAT MESMERISM IS A KEY WHICH WILL UNLOCK MANY CHAMBERS OF MYSTERY.

BY

ALLEN PUTNAM,

AUTHOR OF "SPIRIT-WORKS;" AND "NATTY, A SPIRIT."

"Amazed I saw how calm they were,
With all this spirit-rising:
They only called these magic arts
A kind of magnetizing.
Oh, what a miracle sublime!
It shows the world's advance,
When spirits leave their bright abodes
To make a table dance!"

FITCH POOLE: *Giles Cory's Dream.*

BOSTON:
BELA MARSH, 14, BROMFIELD STREET.
1858.

Digitized by Google

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON AND SON,

22, School Street.

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

THE design of this little treatise was formed in the autumn of 1855. In February, 1856, the substance of it was given to the public at Salem, in the form of a lecture, and has since been repeated in many other places. Now its facts have been re-arranged, and the comments somewhat extended, for the purpose of letting it reach the public without the author's presence.

The view here reached — viz., that the marvels of all the ages have been produced in obedience to some universal law or laws — is one of no small importance, if it be correct. It is sent forth that the reading world may look at it, and judge, each man for himself, whether it possess intrinsic value. It goes forth with the prayer, that it may shed light upon the direct pathways to truth, and prove to be a germ of benefit to man, as both mortal and immortal.

ALLEN PUTNAM.

ROXBURY, MASS., Jan. 15, 1858.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

TREATISE.

INTRODUCTION.

As far back and as wide-spread as the sweep of human history, we get distinct accounts of many phenomena, whose nature and character imply some other cause than any which science satisfactorily defines. The magicians of Egypt in the days of Moses, the Delphic oracles, the visions of Mahomet, the voices heard by Joan of Arc, Scottish second-sight, the works of Witchcraft in both the Old and the New World, the visions of Swedenborg, those of the Seeress of Prevorst, together with many curious results of Mesmerism, as well as those of Spiritualism, — these occurrences, and others like them, all point to some agency not well defined by science. The world continues to ask, as it has ever asked, "Who or what produces these strange works?" And the learned give, as yet, no satisfying answer.

Possibly the phenomena of Mesmerism and Spiritualism may point out to us the direction in which the true answer lies, and may throw some light upon

Digitized by Google

the processes by which the unaccountable works have been wrought. Perhaps enough has been witnessed in our day to render it probable that all such works, in all ages, have been performed *in compliance with some universal law.*

My purpose is to exhibit some of the facts of Mesmerism which are free from all suspicion of the miraculous or supernatural, and to let such facts carry us, step by step, up into the region of Spiritualism. When this has been done, Spiritualism may or may not appear to *you* just as natural as Mesmerism. If it should, you will find a way opened for the admission of new light into the long-darkened chambers of Witchcraft, and other mysteries in human history.

As seen by me now, Mesmerism, Spiritualism, Witchcraft, Miracles, all belong to one family, all have a common root, and are developed by the same laws. The *spirits of men* perform these wonders; and all of them do it, and have ever done it, by substantially the same processes. When these spirits are embodied, we call their work mesmeric, or a result of animal or human magnetism: when the spirits are disembodied, we call their operations Spiritualism. Living men, and dead ones too, are mesmerizers. If this can be made apparent, the world's wonders are at once and easily traceable to competent authors; and the world is favored with a glimpse of a universal law which has not heretofore been duly recognized.

A ladder of *many* steps might be constructed, on which one could go, by easy and gradual ascent, from the simplest forms of Mesmerism up to the highest

Digitized by Google

phases of Spiritualism. But I must confine myself to seven rounds only. The spaces from one to the next above may be rather long; but I shall not take time to put in more.

First Step. — The first step up from the ground, or from man's normal state, is that in which a mesmerizer gets control of only the *limbs* of the person magnetized, — of the *limbs* only, — not the mind.

About three years ago, a lady came from the far interior to her friends in Boston, having been driven from home by the tormenting *will-power* of a mesmerist. The man had made to her proposals of marriage, which it was her pleasure to decline. Chagrined or vexed by her refusal, he went to meeting early on Sunday mornings; seated himself in his pew; and, when the lady arrived, her steps would be arrested while she was walking up the aisle, and she would be held there, immovable, by the man's *invisible* power. Imagine her mortification, and the amusement of many thoughtless beholders. If, perchance, you think that God will restrain *evil spirits* from coming and working among men, what ought you to require him to do in the case of *such a man?* Whatever you may think the occasion called for, God did not prevent such a man from using natural laws in the accomplishment of a cruel purpose.

Soon after the suffering lady arrived in Boston, others with me listened to her story; and, as she had asked our advice, we recommended that she should

Digitized by Google

submit herself to the operations of another magnetizer, of great power and friendly dispositions. The man upon whom she called was a spiritualist and a medium; yet his process with her was mainly mesmeric. Without explanation, he read the nature and cause of her troubles, stated them accurately, made mesmeric passes over her for several minutes, subsequently repeated this process, and, in a few days, put her in such condition that she returned to her home saturated with an element which the shafts of her enemy could not penetrate. A stronger than he had entered, and dwelt there. Both bad spirits and good ones, then, *while in the body*, are allowed to use the same natural forces and laws, — the former to harm, the latter to help, the same individual. The malevolent magnetizer of this lady put forth a spirit-power which controlled her limbs: the benevolent operator put forth a spirit-power which unbound her chains. Both conformed to the same natural law, — a law by which some men are enabled to bring the bodies of certain other persons in subjection to their own wills. This is the first step on our ladder.

Second Step. — Take now a second step. There we shall find the *body* controlled, as before; and shall also find *consciousness* and *sensation* apparently put to sleep. Several years ago, a mesmerist brought to a public hall in Roxbury two female subjects, whom he soon entranced. At this exhibition, a position was assigned me which was very favorable for noting carefully the condition of these subjects while in the trance. Their limbs were very rigid; and they seemed

Digitized by Google

insensible to every thing excepting what was said or done or willed by the operator. While I was trying vigorously, but unsuccessfully, to bend the outstretched arm of one of them, whose normal strength must have been much less than my own, I contrived to thrust a pin quite forcibly into her bare limb; and, to my surprise, she manifested no sign of sensation. That, and other tests, showed that the mesmeric process in that case took from the nerves their sensitiveness, when acted upon through other channels than the operator. Rigidity of limbs, insensibility of nerves, and an *apparent* suppression of individual consciousness, were the observable phenomena of that exhibition.

Surely that power is not unimportant, which, going forth from the mind of one living man, can so penetrate and act upon another's living organism as to render it rigid and insensible almost as a corpse. Yet Mesmerism showed or involved such a power. No one then and there thought of the supernatural or the miraculous: there was no miracle. The operator simply worked in fitting compliance with some natural law; and he seemed to expel or extinguish the mind of his subject, and himself to rule over that subject's body. This case steps beyond the former one, in that it shows an apparent extinguishment, for the time being, of consciousness and the mental powers.

Third Step. — A third position may show us very different and apparently opposite results. Let us, then, step upon the third round of the ladder. Twelve years ago, or more, I saw a young man mesmerized; and

Digitized by Google

the operator soon put me in communication with him, as the phrase was. Sitting by me, with his eyes bandaged, this entranced subject soon began to speak of seeing the scars of ulcers in my throat, and a pain in my left side. "*See* a pain," said I. "I should like to know how a pain *looks*." — "It looks," he said, "like a greenish smoke or vapor, moving and curling about." Now, all the presumptive proofs I can furnish of his seeing as he represented are the facts that I had several times, in early life, suffered from severe ulcers in the throat, and also that I had a slight pain in my left side while he was speaking.

Another manifestation made by him at the same sitting more conclusively proved that he possessed *extraordinary powers of vision.* Several times I held my watch over the *top* of his head, and very near to it; and, though I each time changed the position of the hands, yet he, firmly blindfolded as he was, told me the exact time as the hands stood. At last I varied the hands, so as not myself to see or know how they stood; and yet he readily saw through the *top* of his own skull, and told me accurately their position. Here was more than thought-reading; for neither he, nor I, nor any one else, could have seen the hands in a normal way. Mesmerism awakened an eye that could and did look through the firm top of the subject's own skull, and which apparently looked deep beneath my own skin. Clairvoyance, or a vision which granite walls and solid mountains do not obstruct, is one of the phenomena of Mesmerism. Perception, which seemed paralyzed in the preceding case, now becomes

Digitized by Google

intensified, and more than that: it becomes more alive than life, — than its own ordinary life.

Fourth Step. — Thus far we find Mesmerism speaking only of things *present.* Take, then, the fourth step, and we may perhaps see it reading some hidden record of the *past.* A mesmerizer, many years ago, brought a young woman into a company of a dozen, more or less, who were all strangers to him and his medium. Soon he put her to sleep; and, at our request, she took us in rotation to describe our several conditions as to health. When half through with the circle, she came to a robust man, then fifty-five years old or more, and, taking his hand, said playfully to him, "Ah! you are a very sick man: I prescribe for *you* a good piece of roast ox every day;" and, turning from him towards the next sitter, added in a quiet tone, "You were never sick a day in your life, excepting when you swallowed that tooth." A marked change flashed over the gentleman's face, — such a change as induced me to suspect that more was signified than the words conveyed to me. Being questioned, the gentleman said, "When a small boy, fifty years ago, I did swallow a tooth, which worked out of the regular passages of the system into my flesh, and made me sick, — so sick, that my parents put me out to board in the family of a famous doctor, where I could be watched and properly treated; and, when I had been with the doctor nearly a year, he detected the locality of the tooth, and cut it out of my thigh."

The wife of this man, who had lived with him

Digitized by Google

thirty years, and who before marriage was his neighbor, did not remember that she had ever heard of that tooth; two of his three children expressed entire ignorance of the facts; but a third child seemed to have a faint remembrance "that grandmother had once said something about the tooth." It is not probable — scarcely is it *possible* — that the mesmerized girl knew, or had ever heard, any thing about that tooth in her normal state. Here, then, Mesmerism seemed to give power to read upon that man's interiors a record of his very strange experience and sufferings fifty years before. Mesmerism brought up before her the *hidden past*, and made it the *obvious present.*

Thus far, we see nothing but the facts and results of simple Mesmerism, or Magnetism. The cases cited are far from being as striking or instructive, in some respects, as are contained in books upon that subject; but they have all occurred under my own observation, and, for that reason, are *to me* more reliable, as fair bases for my own reasoning, than others could be. They take us fairly and fully into the field of *wonder*, but not the field of the proper *spiritual.* They lift us towards it; but, as yet, that field does not come in sight: one step higher may help us to a glimpse of it.

Fifth Step. — Three or four years ago, I called upon a well-known clairvoyant, at her residence, in the western part of Boston. Her husband magnetized her; and, in a few minutes, she turned from the track along which I tried to lead her, — it being my pur-

Digitized by Google

pose to obtain for a friend some information as to the whereabouts of a man who had strayed from his home. She turned from my track, and began to describe the *spirit* of an aged man whom she saw, and who, she said, was strongly attracted to me. The form, features, complexion — the whole description — brought my own father at once to my thoughts; though, up to that moment, I had no idea that *she*, a subject of Mesmerism, would allude to any one who had left the form. Yet she did, in opposition to my own intention, carry my thoughts to the *spirit-spheres*, and fixed them upon one whom the world calls dead. Scarcely had this been done, when there came from the lips of the clairvoyant a description of an aged female; and, though my mother is yet living, I was obliged to see and to feel that she was very accurately described. She was more than fifteen miles away in the country, and was a stranger, as I was myself, to the medium.

Here was something new in my experience and observation. Where I had gone to inquire about things of earth, there came, unexpectedly, a description of one whom I had followed to the grave; and while my thoughts were thus turned to him, a spirit, there came out, with equal clearness, a description of one who is still living; and yet not a word or tone from the medium intimated that they were not both there present, and seen with equal clearness. Both the dead and the absent living seemed to be seen by her. This surprised me; but, without hinting the surprise, I quietly asked her if they were both in the

Digitized by Google

same sphere. "The same sphere?" she answered. "Why, no. Your *mother* is still in the form." And then, although fifteen miles from her, she examined that mother's physical condition.

Afterwards, at the same sitting, she described my wives, — two that are gone, and the one that remains; and, though the living one was then three miles off, she described them as if all were at the same time equally within her range of vision: and her descriptions were all discriminative and good. Here, then, on the fifth round of our ladder, we behold Mesmerism enabling one to see both those who have departed, and persons at a distance who are still in the form.

At a subsequent sitting, this same clairvoyant not only described two male spirits, and gave, as their names, the names of two distant relatives, though near friends, of mine, but also professed to hear them speak, and repeated their words. She seemed clairaudient as well as clairvoyant. She *heard* as well as saw the spirits.

This lady has not, to my knowledge, been suspected of Spiritualism. Many years ago, long before the Rochester knockings, her clairvoyant powers were freely used and widely known. Whether spirits do or do not assist her in her work; whether they *voluntarily* present themselves, so as to be seen by her, or whether she sees them without their approach, their knowledge, or consent, as was obviously the case with my living mother and wife; whether they knowingly *come* to her, or whether she merely sees them where

Digitized by Google

they happen to be, — is of no consequence at this stage of our inquiry. The only point in which she went any farther, in my presence, with the dead than with the living, was that she reported to me the *words* of two *spirits*, while she has not given any message from living mother and wife. But I am not prepared to say that she could not do this, and even then be only a mesmerized subject, — *such a subject*, however, that her internal eye could see the objects, and her ear hear the sounds, of the spheres above. This might be; and yet it might also be, that the dwellers above would not intrust to her, or give through her organism, any messages. Mesmerism may lift a mortal to the skies, and yet fail to bring an angel down. We have had, in this case, a glimpse at something which seems much like Spiritualism; yet we are disposed to call it only *ripening Mesmerism.* Thus far, each medium has had a *visible* magnetizer.

Sixth Step. — Take the sixth step, and we shall reach a case in which there was no visible, certainly no *avowed*, mesmerizer; and yet the apparent marks of Mesmerism were manifested. The medium passed into a sleep, or trance, like the mesmeric; and he seemed to see and hear marvellous things, as mesmeric subjects do. Probably he was *mesmerized*, — mesmerized by some *spirit*, or *band of spirits.* Call the case one of *Mesmerism*, if that name please you best: the name will not alter the facts. I am willing to call it mesmeric; for, since men and spirits produce many identical results in these entrancing processes, there is obvious propriety in designating

Digitized by Google

some of the works of the two classes by the same term.

While I was sitting beside a stranger, in a room where twenty or more persons had assembled, he closed his eyes, and exhibited the usual appearance of one in the mesmeric sleep, or trance. Soon he said, "I see the spirit of a young lady approaching, who has been but a short time in the spirit-world. I wonder what she wants. Oh! I see: she wants to send a message to her friends in earth. She says, 'Sarah Dunn told me, that, if I would come here, I could get a chance to send a message; but who will write it?'" My right arm was resting upon a table; and I said, "I will." Her message, in substance and in brief, was, "Tell William not to mourn so much for my death: if he does, it will unbalance his mind, and injure his health. Tell him that I shall be with him, and watch over and befriend him, even if he forms other connections," &c.; and she added, "Do persuade him that this really comes from me."

"And who are you?" was my query. She answered, "*Lizzie.*" No cross-questioning could bring out the other name. Soon I asked to whom and where her message should be sent. She answered, "To Whitefield, Me.; to William Crowell, care of Maj. Crowell. William is a young man: send it to the care of his father." Upon questioning the company then present, including the medium, not one of us, as far as could be learned, had ever known or heard of William Crowell or Maj. Crowell, or Lizzie,

Digitized by Google

or Sarah Dunn; nor did any one of the company know where Whitefield is.

When Lizzie had done with the medium, another spirit, supposed to be Sarah Dunn, spoke to him, urging us to comply with Lizzie's request, because her relatives were much distressed at her sudden and unexpected death, and were anxious about her future state, "Yet," said Sarah, "she was a good girl, — far ahead of them." My pencilled notes, made at the time, were carried in my pocket three or four days. It seemed foolish to comply with the request of a ghost, a phantom; and there was no probability that a letter, if written and directed in accordance with the instructions, would be opened till it reached the dead-letter office at Washington. Yet I had promised to write; and conscience was not quite easy under neglect. At last I wrote out the communication, directed and mailed it to — nobody, nowhere, as seemed most probable. Ten or twelve days afterwards, the mail brought me a response, the important parts of which I give verbatim: —

"WHITEFIELD, ME., Nov. 27, 1853.

"Mr. ALLEN PUTNAM.

"Dear Sir, — Your letter of the 18th instant is received, and read with the most profound interest. Its contents are equally mysterious and startling; the more so, as we are entire strangers to each other. I will say that the facts stated are, in the main, correct; and we are intensely interested in putting the main fact to a further and more satisfactory test."

Then followed a series of questions, with a request that I would get them answered; and the letter was signed, "William Crowell."

Digitized by Google

I saw the medium two or three times subsequently, but not in any full trance; and soon he left the vicinity, and I lost all track of him. In my further correspondence with William Crowell, I learned that Lizzie White and Sarah Dunn were intimate friends, and died at about the same time. Up to this hour, no fact has come to light which hints that either William Crowell, Maj. Crowell, Lizzie, or Sarah, had ever been known or heard of by any one who was present at our circle in Boston. Yet the facts stated and implied in the medium's account of what he was seeing and hearing were, "*in the main, correct.*" Here was a power, — be it mesmeric, if you wish — but here was a power, in Boston, competent to give the names Lizzie, Sarah Dunn, Maj. Crowell, and William Crowell; power to locate them in Whitefield, Me.; power to indicate to us that William and Lizzie were lovers, that Sarah was intimate friend, that the Major was William's father; there was power to frame a message suited to William's condition; power to indicate the character of Lizzie's death; power to depict the thoughts of surviving friends concerning Lizzie's condition in the spirit-world; there was power in or through a stranger at Boston to see and tell all these things so precisely, that William Crowell wrote to me that the facts stated "are, in the main, correct."

Whence that power? The medium, and all persons present at the sitting, denied all knowledge of any one of the persons named; and four years which have since passed have brought no evidence that they

Digitized by Google

either falsified or were mistaken. Who were the authors? They purported to be, and seem to have been, Lizzie and Sarah, — *spirits*, — appearing to the sight, and addressing the ears, of the medium. If one can give a simpler or more probable solution of this, than the claimed fact that Lizzie and Sarah did appear there and then, and were seen and heard by the medium, I shall be most happy to receive and to adopt it. Let this case, too, be one of Mesmerism. I care not for the name: the name cannot alter the facts. If your Mesmerism admits the presence and action of those *spirits*, then such Mesmerism and my Spiritualism are, to some extent, the same thing. Both let the departed come, and give to us intelligible communications. On this round of the ladder, we find that spirits *give information never before possessed by any person present.*

Seventh Step. — Thus far our mediums have all been *entranced.* They seem to be put into an abnormal condition by some power outside of themselves. But take another step up, and the aspect will change again.

I went alone to a medium's room. I had never seen her before; and she said she did not know me. I believed her, because she had but just come to Boston from the country, and because this was months before the public, or many spiritualists, knew that I was investigating the subject. I gave no name, but took a seat by her table, and asked for a sitting. She assented, but kept her position in a rocking-chair. I sat side to the table, with the right arm resting upon

Digitized by Google

it. She sat on my left, four or five feet from the table. I asked whether she did not come to the table. She replied, that it made no difference in what part of the room she sat. She continued to sit at her ease in the rocking-chair, and entered into conversation; being, to all appearance, as wide-awake, and in as natural a condition, as any one ever was. There were none of the usual evidences of Mesmerism, — no trance, no sleep, no loss of sensation or consciousness, no abstraction of the senses from objects and sounds about her; but, in all respects, she seemed natural and normal.

Yet, on the table by my arm, there soon came tiny raps, not louder than you would make by gently tapping with the head of a pin. "Is that," I asked, "a friend of mine?" Three gentle taps. "Is it a relative?" Three taps again. "Will you spell out the relationship?" Three taps. The alphabet being called over, the responsive raps brought out the word *daughter*. This took me aback; for I had never lost a daughter. Yet, without hinting at the mistake, I said, "My daughter, will you give me your name?" Three taps; and the responses to the alphabet gave me, *Louisa Putnam*. It surprised me that *Putnam* came out; for I had given no name, and could not understand how the medium could have learned who I was. She denied any knowledge of my name, and with apparent honesty. The other name, *Louisa*, belonged to no departed friend that I could think of. My next question was, "What was your mother's name?" Ans. "*Hannah*." Next I said, "My daugh-

Digitized by Google

ter, will you tell me how long you have been in the spirit-land?" Ans. "I do not know; but I will go and see if I can ascertain." After a silence of two or three minutes, there came three raps, much louder than the former ones. "Have you come," I asked, "at the request of the spirit who just went from here?" Ans. "Yes." — "What would you like to say?"

Ans. "I have come to tell you, that your angel-daughter, whom you never saw, and whose spirit is too ethereal to be robed in flesh," &c. . . . "often comes to visit you, in company with other angels, to teach you lessons of innocence. — Hannah D. P."

I thought, and my friends would say, that I had never lost a daughter. Yet I have found one, — strangely, yet most gladly, found one. Hannah D. P., my second wife, would have been a mother in three or four months, had her life been spared; but, whether of son or daughter, the grave alone seemed able to tell. No name had been thought of for that child; no clear faith was had that the unborn child had become a conscious dweller in the land of immortality. Yet the unthought-of child, the unnamed daughter, did, by the use of emanations from a medium, gain her father's ear, give herself a name, give her mother's name, and call that mother to come, and vouch for her presence. The daughter, never seen or known in the form, — the unborn child, — has reached her father's mind and heart. She *lives;* and she was the first to tell me that she lives and loves.

Digitized by Google

Those little *raps* there became most eloquent and instructive. Man's highest learning, eloquence, and piety could not have so touched the parental heart, and given such assurance of filial recognition and immortality, as did those *tiny sounds*. There was no vision here; no form was seen; no words were heard; but *little raps* spoke at my elbow, when the medium alone was present with me, and she sitting at her ease away from the table. Here was no control of the body's organs, or the mental faculties; no apparent work *within* the medium, but a work outside of and distant from her. Mesmerism proper, so far as I have learned, does its work *within*, or directly through one living human organism, and upon another. When man magnetizes, the effects are not outside of the subject's body, and not upon inert matter directly. This case differs from the former ones, because here the medium, as such, neither sees nor hears nor speaks; but *a table* seems to embody intelligence, and power of expression. The little *rap* is an effective preacher. We have reached the region of *physical* manifestations.

And, where we now stand, let us look at another case. Taking my seat, one bright summer afternoon, at one end of a medium's table, with her at its side on my right, she commenced to speak, and I to write, a communication from one of my near relatives. While we were thus busied, my eye happened to see that a vacant chair, at the end of the table opposite to me, was sliding or moving on the floor. Looking under the table, I saw that the chair was at least a yard from any

Digitized by Google

part of the medium, and also from myself; and we were the only persons in the room. The chair kept on moving. The room was light, very light; my view was perfectly distinct; and there, before me, the chair continued its movings.

The late Robert G. Shaw and myself had several times met in that room; and I had learned, that, while living, he had said, that, if it were possible for him, after death, to come to that place, he would; and also that he would try to move a chair, instead of the table. Remembering this, I said, "How do you do, Mr. Shaw?" Instantly the chair brought up its front legs at least four or five inches, and then struck firmly back upon the floor three times. "I am happy to meet you, Mr. Shaw." And three times again the chair gave its emphatic tips. "Is Spiritualism true?" Three tips again. "Will it be injurious to the world?" One tip. By this time the chair had changed its position, so that one of its legs came near a leg of the table. I next asked, "Do you, Mr. Shaw, advise me to go on with my investigation of this subject?" The chair now poised itself upon a single leg, and, by a swing or sideway motion, brought another leg forcibly against the leg of the table three times. Then, while waiting my next question, it held itself still on a single leg; and, as successive questions were put, it did, by one swing or by three, give negative and affirmative answers. In that position it held on until ten or twelve questions had been answered, — till I had put all the questions that occurred to me, which could well be answered by a

Digitized by Google

simple yes or no. When I ceased to question, the chair bowed itself slowly and gently over to the floor, without falling, and thus bade me good-by. All this occurred in broad daylight, and extended through more than five minutes of time. It was as fairly and as accurately seen by me as any object and motion ever were or ever can be. With my own eyes I *saw all that*, if I ever saw any thing. If I see the paper on which I am now writing, then I saw such motions of that chair. There was no mistake. The medium did not move it; and I did not. Some invisible, intelligent power seemed to be there, and to do it. This statement is carefully made; and, so long as I continue to hold God and truth to be more worthy of reverence than man and public opinion, my pen and my tongue will maintain its substantial correctness. This case is like the last, excepting that the power exerted upon inert matter seems much greater here.

We are now dealing with those *rappings* and *tippings* which are sometimes ridiculed and sneered at as low and vulgar, — as beneath a spirit's *dignity*. Are they such, in fact? What did those strange movements of the dumb chair teach? *Dumb*, can I call it? No; oh! no; because it gave forth more instructive and commanding eloquence than the tongue of *any man* could have uttered. It spake as never man spake. The chair was instinct with life, intelligence, and power, there in my very presence. I could no more doubt the action of mind in and through that chair, than I can in and through your body or mine, when our lips give utterance to thoughts.

Digitized by Google

A moving and guiding mind was there: the motions *proved* that. It was not the medium's mind, nor mine: whose, then, but Mr. Shaw's?

When mind, whether in the body or out, acts upon and greatly modifies a living human organism and its indwelling mind, — call all such work *Mesmerism*, if you will; but the common significance of that term must be enlarged before it can designate that power which puts a tongue into the dumb chair, — a power more aside from man's ordinary force than the clearest vision, the keenest ear, or the highest eloquence, of the entranced. In the *rap* and the *tip*, you have proof of some intelligence working outside of and apart from man's organs, muscles, and nerves. You may laugh at the antics of household furniture; but those little acts embody *proof* of some strange and mighty power behind them. The little imply the great. Once, in olden times, *apparently* low acts were connected with a most beneficent result. One of wonderful healing powers spat upon the ground, made clay of the spittle, and rubbed such a mixture upon the eyes of a blind man. Would such an act as that comport with your notions of *dignity* and *propriety?* Yet ridicule that act, and *whom* will the gibe hit? A table, vocal with raps, may be the most *fitting* instrument of opening many closed eyes in our day, — may help *our blind ones to see visions of angels.*

The tilting chair, clearly heard and understood, will bespeak the presence and power of an angel. No embodied mind can do the works which that mind does. The philosopher, the profound thinker,

Digitized by Google

the strong logician, finds that these slurred knockings and tippings are among the strongest grappling-irons by which the other world could draw this one to itself. They *prove* the presence of more than man's power; they imply *spirit-agency:* and thus they become foundation-stones, on which faith in the presence and communion of the departed may rest immovable, — *foundation-stones*, essential in their time and place, but which will be generally covered up, and perhaps forgotten, when the fair temple of Spiritualism they are to uphold in each believer shall begin to show its growing walls.

We have reached the top of our ladder, and will recall the several steps of ascent.

1. Mesmerism controlled the medium's *limbs.*

2. It stiffened the limbs, deadened the sensation, and *smothered the mind*, of the medium.

3. It induced *trance*, and awakened a vision that could look out through the skull, and into the interior of another's body, and see things as then and there existing.

4. It induced trance, and awakened a vision, which, looking back fifty years, could find an erratic tooth, and trace the effects of its abnormal wanderings.

5. It awakened power to see the forms of the absent living, and power both to see and to hear departed spirits. Here Mesmerism begins to ripen into Spiritualism; here lamb begins to look like mutton, veal to taste like beef.

6. The trance is induced by some *unseen* power: and spirits are seen and heard; and they give us

Digitized by Google

facts not known before. The lamb and the veal are more matured here than in the former case: the Mesmerism expands more distinctly into Spiritualism.

7. No rigidity of limb, no action upon the body or the mind of the medium, is observable; yet the spirit-daughter communicates, and does it by *raps.* She makes a *table speak*, which Mesmerism proper has never done. Her work is Spiritualism, is mutton, is beef. The same is true, and is still more markedly shown, in the case of the tipping chair. Thus, by regular steps, we have ascended from the simplest phases of Mesmerism up to distinct Spiritualism.

Accounts of more wonderful manifestations than these which are now described might be cited from the published facts of Mesmerism and Spiritualism. Quotations from others might show various phases of these subjects, which do not become apparent from the few facts here detailed. But I am not attempting a full treatise; and I purposely confine myself to cases which have occurred before my own eyes, the facts of which I therefore *know to be true.* These cases have been cited in *the above order*, for the purpose of intimating that Mesmerism, which is a generally admitted fact, may, by a natural growth, run up into some of the forms of Spiritualism. If they do show this, then they take from Spiritualism every suspicion of the supernatural, the miraculous, or the exclusively devilish. They then teach that Spiritualism is absolutely but an outgrowth from the application of universal *natural* laws, and should be investigated as calmly and as philosophically as is electricity, magnetism,

Digitized by Google

chemistry, or any other natural science. The purpose of this little treatise is mainly to present the claims of Spiritualism in that light, as something *natural.*

The influence which a powerful mesmerizer exerts over a fitting subject, the clairvoyance and clair-audience which the trance induces, together with the intelligence which makes raps and tips, imply elements of powers sufficient to produce all the marvellous phenomena of Witchcraft. And now, with such a lamp to our feet, let us go back to the dark day of the most terrific scenes in New England's history.

The commencement of Salem Witchcraft occurred in the family of Rev. Mr. Parris, of Salem Village then, but Danvers now. One of the girls in his family seemed to go into convulsion-fits; "her limbs being twisted several ways, and being made very stiff." She named *Tituba*, an Indian or West-Indian servant-maid in the family, as the cause of her strange condition. Is it impossible that Tituba had mesmeric powers, and that this girl was susceptible to her mesmeric influence? This case looks like one of simple Mesmerism. But if, as tradition long years ago told me (though I have no remembrance of noticing it in the books), — *if* this little girl of eleven years wrote in Latin, though she had never studied that language, then some *spirit* may have used her hand, and thus have furnished a case of Spiritualism.

The agonies and convulsions produced in those days by the eyes and hands, when accusers and accused were confronted, also the sudden reliefs expe-

Digitized by Google

rienced, were no greater than are often experienced now, and are conceded to be the effects of Magnetism.

In their abnormal states, the "afflicted" ones of old were accustomed to see "*the Black Man;*" and theology *then* called him *the Devil.* But Margaret Rule, of Boston, was attended by "seven or eight spectres at once, whereof she imagined she knew three or four." She was visited by a *white spirit*, and "had a frequent view of his bright, shining, and glorious garments." This girl, too, while lying upon her bed at night, in Boston, saw and named a young man who was in danger of drowning, away down the harbor; and, the next day, the fact of his exposure and danger at the time when she saw him was fully confirmed. Also she was lifted from her bed, and, in horizontal position, raised to the ceiling above by some invisible power, and held there so firmly that "it took three or four men to pull her down." Such are facts according to Cotton Mather, — her minister and her very constant attendant. Here spirits were seen; a living man was seen miles distant, struggling in the water, though it was in the night, and the seer was in a house in Boston, upon her bed. Also a strong physical manifestation was shown when the invisible power raised and held her to the top of her room. But all the facts in her case have their parallel, generically, in the cases of Mesmerism and Spiritualism before given.

Take the case of the Rev. George Burroughs. He was executed on Gallows Hill, in Salem. And

Digitized by Google

why? For Witchcraft. And what were the charges which involved that particular *crime?* They were, that he had kept his two deceased wives in a strange kind of servitude; that he knew things which he could not have learned without the Devil's help; and that he performed superhuman feats of strength. Cotton Mather says that "Burroughs kept his two successive wives in a strange kind of slavery, and pretended to tell the talk which any one had with them when he was absent. His wives had privately complained unto the neighbors about frightly apparitions of evil spirits with which their house was sometimes infested." No wonder that they were uneasy, and felt *enslaved.* Knowledge by the husband of their *private* talk with others, and the apparition of spirits at their home, would have enslaved strong minds, and disturbed stout hearts, in days when all marvellous works were ascribed to the Devil, and when the belief was prevalent that the Devil could work through no man without the man's own consent and distinct compact. Yet we have only to look upon Burroughs as a good *medium*, and all the apparent supernatural becomes natural, and is easily accounted for.

Again: when Burroughs repeated to Ruck, his brother-in-law, a conversation which Ruck had just been holding privately with his sister, Burroughs's wife, "Ruck, being startled, intimated that the Devil himself did not know so far." Burroughs replied, "My God makes known your thoughts unto me." This power of thought-reading is now possessed by

Digitized by Google

many, in both the trance and the apparent normal state; and it is a strictly natural, though not a general, possession. It was a God-given power, as all our powers are; and Burroughs, having it, used it legitimately.

Again: "Burroughs was a very puny man; yet he had often done things beyond the strength of a giant. A gun of about seven feet barrel, and so heavy that strong men could not steadily hold it out with both hands, — there were several testimonies given in, by persons of credit and honor, that he made nothing of taking up such a gun behind the lock with one hand, and holding it out, like a pistol, at arm's-length. In his vindication, he was so foolish as to say that an *Indian* was there, and held it out at the same time: whereas none of the spectators ever saw any such Indian; but they supposed *the Black Man* might have given him assistance, — *the Black Man*, as the witches call the Devil (and they generally say he resembles an Indian)." Ah! do *they* say *that*, Cotton Mather? Do the witches generally say that the Black Man which they see *resembles an Indian?* Yes, you yourself have so stated. Now, since he resembled an Indian, why was he not some Indian, — some Indian spirit, neither more nor less? He was that which he looked like, — an Indian. Forget your Devil, and take your witnesses at their word, Cotton Mather, and *how changed* appears the agency in all the terrific scenes of Witchcraft! All becomes reduced to simple Mesmerism and Spiritualism.

Burroughs *saw an Indian* (invisible to others) handle

Digitized by Google

the gun as he himself did; and possibly he believed, as we can now believe, that the Indian filled Burroughs's own feeble body with more than the strength of the strongest *man*. The horns, the tail, the cloven hoof, now vanish; and the acquaintances of Margaret Rule; the red men of the forest; the bright and glorious visitant who came to Margaret Rule, and of whom "the enchanted people have talked much, and from whom they received marvellous assistances," — these are the strange visitants, these the *actors*, in the days of Witchcraft. The very face of the record shows all this.

Burroughs "being upon his trial, one of the bewitched ones was cast into horror at the ghosts of Burroughs's two deceased wives then appearing before him. Hereupon several of the bewitched persons were successively called in; who all, not knowing what the former had seen and said, concurred in their horror of the apparition which they affirmed that he had before him, . . . and said that the spectres *told them* they were the wives of Burroughs." Here it comes out that the spirits of Burroughs's departed wives were both seen and *heard*, and that, too, by *several* of the bewitched ones, or mediums, *independently*.

There are, in Cotton Mather's writings concerning this man, indistinct intimations that the creed of Burroughs was not fully coincident with the prevailing one; and it is possible that sectarian bigotry helped to find him guilty of a capital offence. But if there was nothing worse about him than the report

Digitized by Google

of his trial indicates, and if the account of his fervent and charitable prayer at the gallows is true, I am inclined to think that *a very good man* paid the forfeit of life because he was for years a good spirit-medium, and received, from the dwellers in the spheres, teachings and influences which raised him so far above sectarianism and *forms* of worship, that he could pray with a *free* soul, and worship on a plane too high for the vision of his accusers. The worse crucified the better.

The old records abound in facts which might be adduced in evidence that Witchcraft is resolvable into Mesmerism and Spiritualism, and therefore into the legitimate operations of natural laws. But we have given to this topic all the space we can afford, till we pass beyond our facts to some speculations and reflections.

The clear-sighted logician will see, I think, that, from the point now reached, a direct path extends on to the Seeress of Prevorst, to Swedenborg, to Scottish seers, to Joan of Arc, to Mahomet, to Roman augurs, Grecian priestesses, and all who have given their contemporaries assurances that they saw spirit-forms, and conversed with the departed or with angels. The prophets, seers, and magicians of all ages and nations may have been all that they claimed to be, and yet have been only mesmeric subjects and spirit-mediums.

This view starts the inquiry, whether any of the Scripture-miracles were the acts of unseen *finite* intelligences, using their normal powers in submission to fixed laws. The question is legitimate and proper.

Digitized by Google

And it gives me pleasure to make an affirmative answer; for, in doing that, I behold a *God so perfect*, that his wisdom and power were, from the beginning, competent to devise such laws as should, without violation, without suspension, admit, under and in obedience to themselves, all the light and all the angel-visitations which his children on earth might *ever need*. When man shall see and feel that heaven's inhabitants may come to earth by natural processes, and work among us just according to their several abilities and characters, then the greatest difficulties of *philosophical faith* in the Bible, as a record of teachings from on high, will melt away, and the wisdom of God himself will appear to us more complete.

The departed Samuel did appear to the woman of Endor and to Saul; Moses and Elias did appear to Jesus and his companions: and, as spirits are seen and conversed with in our day, the fair presumption is, that the processes of return were the same then as now. Angels rolled the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre; they opened Peter's prison-doors. Spirits move heavy bodies now; and why not by the same laws as then? In olden times, *such* works were done in the dark: they are mostly and most successfully done in the dark now, and thus give ground for presumption that both are manifestations of one law. Unlearned apostles spoke in languages which they had never talked or studied before: many mediums now do the same. The sick were healed by a look or a touch: the same thing is frequently done now.

Digitized by Google

Jesus, in a certain place, performed but few mighty works, *because of the unbelief* which surrounded him; and, at this day, *unbelief* on the part of those present is a formidable bar to spirit-manifestation. Jesus walked upon the water: Margaret Rule floated in the air; and so have others quite recently. These and other points of resemblance in the manifestations indicate a compliance with the same law or laws.

The above conclusion by no means requires one to ascribe the same wisdom and holiness to the spirits who come now as to those who came of old; nor does it bring the moral and religious character of Jesus and the apostles into comparison with that of modern mediums. Formerly there was occasion to "*try the spirits;*" and most surely the need exists at the present day. Far back in Jewish history, God *said* he would put a *lying spirit* in the mouth of his prophet; and it is written, that an evil spirit *from the Lord* troubled Saul. Lying and evil spirits from some source, as well as truthful and good ones, find their way into mediums now. The mediums themselves are not all supposed to be above treachery and deceit. There was one Judas of old: perhaps our times furnish many. There were both good and bad spirits and prophesiers in Bible times; and there are both good and bad spirits and mediums, too, at the present day.

One fact of Scripture, showing the immediate author or authors of John's inspiration when writing the Apocalypse, may throw a bright light upon the subject of spirit-action. Jesus sent *his angel* to *John*, "*in the spirit;*" and, "*in the spirit,*" John saw and

Digitized by Google

heard that angel, and learned from him that he was *not God*, but one of John's brethren, the prophets. This seems to be a clear statement that the spirit of one who had been a prophet on earth was sent by Jesus to John ; and that, when the angel was present, John, "in the spirit" (trance?), saw and heard the things which he described and recorded. That angel was a speaker to John; and it is his words, in part, which come to us as *inspiration*. Let that light shine back upon the Book of Daniel, and some other parts of the Scriptures, and see if the Bible itself does not contain internal *proof* that individual, finite spirits furnished many parts of it to the recording mediums, and thus indicate that *inspiration* from above comes in obedience to some universal law. Let a view like this become general; and then, if its effects upon those who already take it warrant a prophecy, the world will turn to the Bible with fresh interest, and find there, more than ever before, a storehouse richly furnished with treasures of truth and love and wisdom *from the heavens*. The Bible will hereafter find its truest friends, its only *invincible* defenders, among those who shall guard it within the walls of Spiritualism, and read it there in the light of *heavenly inspiration*.

If enough has been exhibited to furnish plausible reason for asking whether Mesmerism is not a key which may unlock many long-closed chambers of mystery, then I have no occasion for further presentation of facts, but may, in the future pages, indulge in some explanations and reflections.

Digitized by Google

Every reader has doubtless asked, "What is *Mesmerism?*" This being put forth as a solvent of many great mysteries of all times, and among all people, what is this Mesmerism itself? Frankly, it is itself quite a mystery yet; but it is not looked upon as involving any thing supernatural, devilish, or in such a sense *miraculous* as to imply either a suspension or a violation of natural laws in its processes of manifestation. Through it we learn that some men, by a concentrated application of their mental forces, aided often by the eye or the hand, can either take from or impart to certain persons some property or fluid which enables the operator to become master in the subject's house or body. Through that other body he manifests *himself;* but he does this only *imperfectly.* He has power there, but not power equal to that which he can display through his own organs. A man is cramped when he has to take a borrowed body; therefore a spirit well may be so too. In successful Mesmerism, the subject will walk or sit or kneel or lie down; will move this way or that; will say this thing or that; will perform the most ludicrous or the most appropriate acts; will see one object or another; will taste or smell or feel any imaginable substance, whether present or not, just according to the *will* of the operator. But this is not all: frequently such possession effects a liberation of the subject's intellectual and perceptive faculties from the control, not of the operator alone, but also from the crampings of his own external organs, and thus enables him to look out through walls of solid masonry, through hills of granite, and into the most interior

Digitized by Google

recesses of the human body, or any other animal or vegetable organism. He seems to possess perceptive faculties which enable him to see and hear and sense through all material *objects*, at vast distances, and in all directions. Thus conditioned, he can read the autobiography of any natural object, scan the distant, and get glimpses of the future. He seems like one freed from the body, and endowed with organs which use *electricity* as their medium of sight and sound: and thus can he see and hear through whatever electricity can penetrate; that is, through almost, if not quite, all material objects. Some men then possess and can put forth such *will-power* as makes certain other men their abject and unresisting tools, — simple *unconscious organs* by which to express their own thoughts and purposes. Sometimes such control is absolute, but in more cases only partial; and such a subduing force, when carried beyond a certain point, pushes the subject's intellectual and perceptive faculties into unwonted freedom and independence, and makes him a more independent and gifted man than before. Such are the results of *human Magnetism*, called Mesmerism only because Mesmer applied it and drew attention to it more definitely and extensively than any one had done before his time. The getting control of another's organism, either by abstracting from it or imparting to it *human Magnetism*, is Mesmerism. It is the action of one mind, in connection with its enveloping body, upon another's body and its indwelling mind. It is some action of the living *upon the living*, and not upon tables and chairs.

Digitized by Google

Many tell us that Spiritualism is nothing but Mesmerism. Of course, such a statement admits that it is as much as Mesmerism; that it is, in fact, the same thing. Thanks for this concession; because Mesmerism, if permitted to mature, may ripen into Spiritualism. Our tree, like the orange, often shows flowers, and green fruit and ripe, at the same time. Much that is supposed to be only Mesmerism is, in fact, Spiritualism; also much of what is regarded as Spiritualism is only Mesmerism. Often, when man magnetizes, he puts his subject into such a state, that some *spirit* quietly slips in and works there, and yet the spirit's presence is not suspected. At such times, an angel is entertained unawares; Spiritualism is there, under the name of Mesmerism. On the other hand, our spirit-mediums often get mesmerized by the company present, so as to become clairvoyant and clairaudient. The internal or spirit eyes and ears of the mediums get opened by the undesigned, unwilled flowings of human magnetism to or from those around them. Their words may report to us spirit-utterances, and describe spirits and spirit-scenes; and yet the real speakers may be only *entranced mortals*, listening to the voices above, and looking into the homes of the ascended. There may be a pure Mesmerism, which opens a way for mortals to see and hear the departed.

What, then, is a distinction between Mesmerism and Spiritualism? Mesmerism is something which a man does while he has his *clothes on:* Spiritualism is a similar act of his *after his clothes have been put off.* Suppose *I* magnetize *you* to-day; and that I, the mes-

Digitized by Google

merizer, speak, write, act, through you, you being unconscious: this is Mesmerism. Suppose, farther, that I die to-night; and that, to-morrow, I, a spirit, come and magnetize you, and then speak, write, act, through you: this is Spiritualism. Here we have the same operator working upon and through the same subject; the only difference being, that, to-day, I, the operator, am in the body, — have my clothes *on;* while, to-morrow, I am to be out of the body, or to have my clothes *off*. Such is the only essential difference between Mesmerism, and Spiritualism in some of its forms. If man's powers are not diminished by the death of his body, then some *spirits* can mesmerize susceptible subjects. No *increase* of power is needed; no miracle is wanted. Mesmerism and Spiritualism may differ no more than the green fruit and the ripe on the same tree. They are nourished through the same roots, the same trunk: one ripens into the other. Those who are so inclined may pluck all the oranges from their own trees while the fruit is yet green: but I beg of them to leave mine upon the branches; and, when an orange there shall have become fully ripe, I trust they will not dissuade me from eating it, by alleging that their own green ones have never tasted good.

Spirits, then, often have to perform the difficult and uncertain process of inducing a full mesmeric sleep, before they can manage the hand or the tongue of flesh. Several persons, who are susceptible to both the mesmeric and the spirit influence, have told me, that, when the controlling fluid comes to them from one in the

Digitized by Google

body, they feel it flowing in horizontally, and entering mostly about the region of the *eyes;* but, when it comes from spirits, the stream is vertical, and enters through the spiritual organs on the *crown of the head.* That the processes of mesmerizing and of spiritualizing a subject are very similar, might be argued from the fact, that both succeed best under like circumstances. Both are most easily performed where all minds are quiet or passive; both ask for good air and an harmonious circle; and both *generally* succeed best with the same organisms and temperaments: in other words, in most cases, but *not in all*, good spirit-mediums can be easily magnetized. The difference, then, between Mesmerism, and Spiritualism in some of its forms, is not enough to let us regard them as *generically* different.

If any spirit can visit earth, and work here, why cannot all others? If my spirit-friend can communicate through a stranger, why can he not do the same through me? Why cannot all spirits come? Why are not all persons mediums? Such questions have come up in every mind. *You* have said, if spirits come, why do they not come to and through *me?* Probably they are hindered by *natural obstacles*, inherent in either them or yourself. How is it in Mesmerism? There are but few successful magnetizers, but few facile subjects. Mr. —— can very easily magnetize several of my acquaintances and friends; but he can produce no effect upon *me.* Why this difference? Feed two oxen alike for years, and then bring them to the shambles: you may find the meat of one

Digitized by Google

tender and juicy, that of the other tough and dry. One man has fine and soft hair, while another's is coarse and hard. Why so? Who can tell me *why?* The facts are obvious; but the reasons for them cannot be given. We can only say, such are the results of God's modes of working. Now, then, if in our fibres and fluids and emanations we differ one from another, why may not some of us be very susceptible to certain influences which others cannot feel at all? Why may not some impart much more easily and powerfully than others? Till the mesmerist can magnetize any one person just as easily and as thoroughly as he can any other, why expect that spirits can? Till all men are efficient magnetizers, why think that all spirits can be? Till all men are facile subjects for the embodied magnetizer, why suppose that they can be for a disembodied one? The hidden reasons which exist in the one case, *ought*, as we view these subjects, to exist also in the other. We believe that they do.

Beyond a certain point, Mesmerism fails to furnish illustration of Spiritualism. We come now to the *raps* and *tips*. This working outside of and distant from the medium's body, and this infusion of animation and intelligence into inanimate wood, is more than Mesmerism has ever claimed or seemed to perform. The *visible living man*, acting upon a *visible living organism*, is always involved in Mesmerism; but many of the physical manifestations of Spiritualism imply some *invisible* power revealing intelligence through *inanimate* matter.

The raps and knockings and table-tippings have

Digitized by Google

never come out among the works of Mesmerism. The harsh poundings, the childish tiltings, the unmannerly antics of heavy pianos and large dining-tables, are, as many say, too low and vulgar for any decent mind in the body to wish for or to prompt: no well-bred mesmerist ever calls for such results. True, true; *but* would they come, if he did call for them? No: he does not show the raps and tips. And why not? Simply because he *cannot*. These low and ridiculed works lie beyond the farthest stretch of his powers. A table rising and floating gently in the air; a piano dancing to the tune that is being played upon itself; a human form rising gently from floor towards the ceiling, and moving dovelike around the room; a chair tipping in answer to questions; and all this where neither muscle nor machinery, nor any tangible mechanical power, was applied; — these things, and others like them, which are happening every month, and are seen over and over again by many credible witnesses, — these things are not found in Mesmerism.

Did animal magnetism, did electricity, did odyle, did either or all of these, constitute the *intelligent actor* in the chair which answered my questions? No: these fluids or forces of nature are *not mind*. They do not, they cannot, guide and control action so as to converse with man. They may be, and doubtless are, *instruments*, through which one mind imparts intelligence to another; but they, in and of themselves, are not mind, and cannot *think* nor act intelligently. Let the most powerful embodied mesmerizer

Digitized by Google

which the world contains try his will upon the insensible chair, and will the chair move at his bidding? No; not the fraction of an inch. Charge the chair, even incased in glass or coated with sealing-wax, — charge it with all the magnetism, electricity, and odylic fluid, imaginable, and will they all generate in it or convey into it mind enough to understand and to answer my question? No; obviously *no*. *You know* that if an embodied mesmerizer should will the chair to move, and keep on willing it to move for hours, that it would not stir an inch, unless he applied his hand to it. His will-power controls only living organism. *You know*, too, that neither magnetism, electricity, nor odyle, could be made to give or to generate a mind in the chair; yet its motions proved that *mind was there*. *Common sense* demands the admission of this.

But mind needs tools or organs when it gives intelligent movements to matter. We usually find it expressing itself through the eye, the face, the tongue, the hand. The acting mind surely needed a hand, or something with the powers of a hand, to move that chair. So also did the one angel to roll away the stone, and the other angel to unlock the prison-door. Something with the powers of a hand was needed in each case. Perhaps a hand was there. Spirits profess to have power, under favorable circumstances, to gather up and use some, to us, invisible emanations from the bodies of our mediums, and elements from the atmosphere in some localities, and to combine these with certain properties inherent in themselves, and from these materials to construct hands, arms, &c.,

Digitized by Google

varying in strength according to their own inherent powers, and the qualities of the foreign materials used: they profess to be able to form hands, arms, &c., varying in strength from those of a feeble infant up to those of a veritable Samson. When such tools have been constructed, the invisible ones work out by aid of them results which man can see and hear and feel. Then raps and tips are heard and seen; then the *low* things become *high*. A hand from out of *the invisible* did once appear, and *write* upon the walls of a banquet-room; and the form of another was put forth, and took Ezekiel by a lock of his head, and the Spirit lifted him up between the earth and the heaven. When were the laws repealed by which such hands were formed, and did their work?

Our whole train of remark implies the supposition, that refined electricity, magnetism, odyle, or *some* unknown, but yet eternal and universal, fluid has been an essential *instrument* in all past spirit-communication, as well in *Judea* as in other lands. It implies, too, that this instrument can never have been wanting in any age. Why, then, have *angel-visits* been so "few, and far between"? We need not answer a query like this because of any bearing it may have upon the question *whether spirits come now.* That ocean and those winds had always existed which bore Columbus to the New World; but the question why Europeans had so seldom, if ever, reached America before, could not invalidate the fact that Columbus himself had reached it. If it be proved that spirits come now, the infrequency of their

Digitized by Google

visits heretofore will not disprove the fact. Still, the question, why they should come so much more frequently and generally now than in former times, is a very natural and proper one, and is worthy of the best answer we can give.

That answer, however, will have little weight with any but those who are already prepared to give some credence where statements are backed by no authority beyond that of utterances through spirit-mediums.

Is it impossible that modes and means of using the subtile fluids in man and nature are better understood, even by *the spirits*, now, than they were in ages past? Can the departed continue to make advances in scientific and practical knowledge? Who among *us* can tell? Electricity and magnetism have always existed; yet it was but quite recently that man became acquainted with their extent and nature, and that he learned how to subject them in any degree to his control; still more recently did he invent the telegraph. Man, by his discoveries in electricity and steam within the last half-century, has become able to convey his thoughts and his person much more widely, speedily, and definitely to people and places on the earth now than he could before. Possibly spirits may have made recent discoveries and inventions, by which they can come to us more easily, speedily, and definitely, and make themselves more distinctly felt and better understood by us, than formerly. Either this is true, or mediumistic fancy has been highly fertile and ingenious. I will cull and arrange.

When Swedenborg reached the spheres above, he

Digitized by Google

did not forget the privilege he had enjoyed, while in the form, of looking into the abodes of both good and bad spirits, and of conversing with the dwellers there. This great natural philosopher soon perceived that his uncommon privileges had come to him in conformity with universal laws; and the inference was a necessary one, that *many* men might have similar visions and illuminations, and be instructed and improved by them. He saw that he had been no special favorite of Heaven, in whose behalf some miracles had been wrought. All in his experience had been natural. Others might attain to the same experience, could they but learn its laws and conditions, and be subjected to them. The point which he had attained unwittingly, many others might attain by care, and by help from above.

Swedenborg was a philanthropist; and his love for man below continued to burn as ardently after he had left the body as it did before: and he states, that he made it his *leading business* in the spheres to draw the attention of philosophic and inventive spirits to the privileges which he had enjoyed while in the form, and to incite them to such investigations, studies, and efforts as should discover the laws by which his blessings had come, and learn how those laws might be applied by spirits and men, so as to bring about an habitual and mutually beneficial intercourse.

When Mesmer ascended to the spheres, he became interested, as thousands were, in these views and purposes of the Swedish seer. His own experiences and operations in his earth-life were calculated to make

Digitized by Google

such a work attractive; and now, more philosophically and under more favorable circumstances than when on earth, he entered upon a scrutiny into the nature and laws of those fluids and forces which had enabled him to be a wonder-worker among men. His studies, combined with his native powers, have fitted him to be a very useful and efficient co-laborer in the band of experimenters.

We find it stated, that Franklin's discoveries of the presence and action of electricity while on earth, and his studies into its properties and workings, had fitted him to become, soon after entering the spirit-world, the wisest and most efficient of Swedenborg's co-laborers in his difficult but philanthropic project. In the spheres, in the world of mentality, divested of clayey encumbrances, able to be the lightning's travelling companion through the clouds, able to trace it to its birthplace, and track it in all its wanderings, he loved the exciting chase. The project of Swedenborg had intense charms for him; and his mighty intellect and noble heart bent their fullest energies upon discoveries in *refined electricity*. In that, or co-extensive with that, he everywhere found life-principle, — found God.

This element was omnipresent; it pervaded the whole ethereal ocean, in which suns and stars and planets and comets swim; it was around them all, and in them all; it reached everywhere, from point to point, throughout the limitless universe. Then why not try to bridle and harness it? Why not seek to make it a manageable and trustworthy bearer of messages

Digitized by Google

from sphere to sphere, from world to world? The inquiry at once welled up in that mind which had taught terrestrial lightning to restrain its wayward gambols, and move orderly down the rods of iron; it welled up in him who had found the elements of lightning diffused throughout our earth, and showed us that portions of it could be stabled in the Leyden jar, and held there ready harnessed for man's use; it welled up, per force, in him who had been chief pioneer on the road which led man to his electro-magnetic telegraph. The question demanded an answer; and who more competent to find it than *Franklin?* None other had carried from earth to heaven such acquaintance with earth's electricity as his; few others had gone up with equal powers of investigation. Who, then, more competent to discover the principles, develop the powers, and invent the instrumentalities, by which the *refined electricity* of the universe might be made the reliable instrument of regular intercommunion between men and spirits? He found that this instrument had been used incidentally in every age and every land, but never *scientifically*, — never, to any extent, with certainty and precision. Success had been but a chance result; or if measurably constant in a few places and times, and with a few persons, its laws were not understood, and therefore no instruction could be given as to the proper modes and means of its use. There was no needle pointing north, — no steam-power to countervail adverse winds and currents. The voyager from heaven to the shores of earth had less certainty of

Digitized by Google

reaching his place of destination, and much less probability of entering a specific harbor, than was desirable. The clearances were "few and far between," because of the difficulties and uncertainties of navigation. Landings, it is true, had been effected in Egypt, Greece, Judea, and many other places; but no means for continued intercourse had been devised, no post-office established, no telegraphic wires stretched. Spirits had not learned how to provide themselves with such accommodations. But "the spirit-world is *progressive*, like unto this."

Swedenborg, Mesmer, Franklin, with hosts upon hosts of others, long sought and labored for methods and means by which to control refined electricity as effectually as we do electro-magnetism when telegraphing. They sought how they might, by means of this element, write their thoughts in man's language, at this end of wires which they could let down. They sought, too, to construct, as it were, submarine armor, in which they could descend, and tarry briefly in, the dense and stifling atmosphere which man inhabits. Researches and experiments, continued through many years, brought partial success. Spirits acquired the power to approach us with more than former certainty, and to act among us with more than former definiteness and precision; and now they trusted that they could do something better for man than the occasional presentation to him of frightful *ghosts*, and the alarming of him by those sights and sounds which make a "*haunted house*." They acquired the power, and had the will, to come in wisdom and benevolence. But

Digitized by Google

man did not know this; and how could they *inform him?* To speak through human lips, and proclaim their presence, even though they should do it with the eloquence and wisdom of an ancient prophet, would produce no conviction of their presence. A Fenelon, a Chalmers, a Robert Hall, a Channing, has done as much; at least, man would say so. Let them state new facts, and unfold new laws of natural science, and their organs would be deemed mere dreamers, because man has not made the attainments, nor constructed the instruments, by which he could take cognizance of what they might assert. Let them make a human tongue speak in a language which it had never learned, and the world would charge that the tongue was drunk, or that disease had created a tongue for *conjectured* old memories. Science seems often more fertile than scientific in its conjectures. The spirit of the old Hebraist himself would seem to be much more competent to talk Hebrew through the sick girl, than was her own conjectured memory of what she most likely had never learned, and therefore could not remember.

How, then, could the spirits make known their presence? They hoped to succeed by giving a tongue to dumb matter, and life and intelligence to the inanimate. This they attempted. They worked first in Germany, then France, then other places in Europe; next came to America; almost obtained success several times, but not quite. They made sounds at several points, which were heard and wondered at, but not traced to the proper authors. At last a little

Digitized by Google

girl near Rochester, grown familiar with the knockings because of their long continuance, and in no great awe of the invisible authors because of her infantile lack of mental power to make them permanently very frightful, said to the spirits, "Do as I do." She snapped her fingers three times; and they rapped three times. "Now five times," said she; and the girl snapped and the spirits rapped five times. "Now ten;" and ten came. Thus the girl's mother, who was present, learned that the unseen actors, who had for days and nights disturbed and wearied the whole family to exhaustion, possessed intelligence enough *to count ten*; and soon she learned that they could comprehend a question, and give a pertinent answer. This was success: the telegraph worked; man recognized spirit-action; the despised little rap evolved itself into a majestic sound; and joy — deep, thrilling joy — swelled in the bosoms of the wise and patient laborers above. They felt that man would soon cease to regard spirits as frightful demigods from out the mists of a mysterious ocean; that man would cease to regard a spirit Columbus or Cortez or Cook as belonging to a different order of being from himself. Their anticipation is partly realized. Only ten years have since passed, and they now have their telegraph-offices — their mediums — in nearly every village and hamlet in the American Union, and very many scattered throughout the Old World. At least three millions of our own people, it is supposed, are believers that they can communicate with us. — Call this whole account, if you please, but a fancy sketch: yet it is

Digitized by Google

not *my* fancy's work; its teachings have come to me through the pens or the lips of others; and it perhaps refutes the charge, that Spiritualism has told man nothing new.

No reader will fail to see that we regard spirits as being learners in natural sciences and in mechanism as absolutely as man is; and from this will follow, not the possibility alone, but the probability, that the spirit-world is becoming more and more rich in instruments, skill, and power to extend and multiply its operations, and its spheres of influence.

Spirit-communication is as strictly natural as is man's telegraphing. It is subject to nice laws, to difficulties, interruptions, and often to absolute failure; yet it is, in the main, so far successful as to give good promise, that, in coming times, it will be quite reliable, and give pleasure and benefit in both worlds. Thousands of spirits are experimenting. Let them rap; let them tip; let them enchain our attention as best they can; and cease your wonder —

> "That souls in bliss should come to earth
> To say their A, B, C."

These playful lines, and the others on our titlepage, quoted from the "Danvers Centennial Celebration, 1852," may have a direct significance, and may assert facts, even though seemingly veiled under the garb and showing the aspect of amusing irony. For pleased attendance upon the self-dancing table does bespeak "the world's advance" to such knowledge, and such freedom from superstitious fears, as enable it calmly

Digitized by Google

to subject the most mysterious occurrences to rigid scrutiny, and trace them beyond the agency of demons, whether good or bad, up to God's legitimate action, or to *legitimate* action in the universe to which he is lawgiver. Also it is "a miracle sublime," that man has risen to where he can tranquilly hold communion with heaven's inhabitants through animated and instructed *wood*. Never before, in all the ages, has his philosophy qualified him for his present calmness amid the wonder-workings of unseen intelligences.

But we do not look for a time when the mere fact that a message comes from the spheres will of itself be conclusive proof of the genuineness, authenticity, or truth, of that which is brought. The process is natural; the agents are fallible; the authors may be foolish and false, or they may be wise and truthful. So long as man's telegraph will convey falsehood as well as truth; and so long as no *moral* qualifications are essential in an operator of the telegraph; so long as the bad man is just as free as the good one to breathe God's air, eat the fruits of the soil, use his own limbs, use his tongue and his pen, or use the mail and the telegraph, — just so long will bad spirits be as free in the use of the spirit-telegraph as are good ones. God's restraints are in no wise different in principle or in relative degree there and here.

Bad spirits, then, *may* come? Certainly. Also bad men may be your chosen correspondents; may be your best-beloved companions: but whose the fault, or where the cause, of this? The reason is within yourself. Like loves and cleaves to its like. Yet the best

Digitized by Google

man may *occasionally* be visited and annoyed by the vilest. The worst man in the nation may write a characteristic letter to the best one. A very bad spirit may enter into a very good man, and annoy him: but the home will not be congenial; and such a spirit will not make it his *abiding*-place. Also a good spirit — a Howard or a Mrs. Fry — may visit depraved mortals. The spirits who *prevailingly* visit any one who believes in, and invites and helps them to come, will, in their essential moral and intellectual traits, be such that the intercourse will be mutually pleasant, as is the case between us and those friends here with whom visits are exchanged freely and without ceremony. And yet the frequent visitor at circles will meet with spirits of vastly varied characters, — as varied as are the characters of the men who surround us. How much ground, then, is there to apprehend that all the spirits who visit earth are evil? Just as much as there is to suppose that all the men and women of the world have been evil. How much ground is there for you to suppose that none but evil spirits would come to *you*, if you opened your doors to spirits? Just as much as there is for you to suspect that your own strongest loves are evil. Devil comes to Devil.

The matter of Witchcraft is worthy of farther notice. There have been some efforts made of late to give the public an impression that most of the troubles of the Witchcraft-times were traceable to the diseased fancies and croakings of a few bedridden old women and some weak and silly children. Such

Digitized by Google

efforts result, no doubt, from that state of mind which inclines one to ignore and disbelieve any facts which *seem* supernatural, however strong the testimony to their occurrence. But it is a libel upon our fathers to regard their testimony as false, and then exhibit the strong, brave men themselves as so weak, foolish, and timid as to let mere *ghost-stories* disturb, to its very foundations, the peace of both Church and State. Unless we ignore ten eventful years of New England's history, we must allow that the leading facts of Witchcraft did occur. Its sights were seen, its sounds were heard, its extraordinary works were performed. That age believed so. Nineteen persons were executed; and the sturdy octogenarian, Giles Cory, was pressed to death. There was some cause for such bloody punishments as these, beyond the tattle of simple girls and bedridden old women. The sober senses and solid judgments of the strong men of that day were not so easily befooled. They witnessed and learned feats beyond the power of man in the flesh to perform; and it was upon *startling facts* that they based their stern, exterminating action.

Behold those strong men, those active servants of their God, bold of heart and firm of nerve, — behold them believing that the Evil One himself was converting broomsticks into saddle-horses; exciting meal-chests to dance jigs; making well-trained children lose all reverence and propriety; luring men and women into his own fearful service, to the everlasting ruin of their souls; — behold them seeing the arch-enemy of God and good men in all these things; and then

Digitized by Google

laugh not at the folly, but respect the heroism, which could go forth with firm tread to meet Satan himself in direct encounter. Trusting in God, those men went to conflict where the bravest on earth's common battle-fields might have feared to wage battle. Turn all the leaves of human history, and not one of them will describe a scene requiring truer courage, or more firm reliance upon God. Let fair respect, and not shame, — yes, let respect, — crown their brows. They were true to their convictions; therefore honor them. But they were mistaken; they *mistook an Indian spirit* for the *Devil;* and out of that mistake came the horrors and fatal wrongs of Gallows Hill.

It is our privilege to live amid like wonders. What happened then in Essex County is occurring now in many of the cities, towns, and villages throughout our land. In most instances, the works go on noiselessly and gently, failing to create much public stir. Our stand-point of view is different from that on which our fathers stood. *The Great Devil* is not visible to us: some smaller ones appear; but they are outnumbered, and held in check, by better spirits. Margaret Rule's glorious and shining bright spirit is in the ascendant now. Thought moves less in deep ruts than formerly. Freedom — intellectual, religious, civil, moral freedom — is greater now than in the times of Witchcraft. The cold shoulder, a sneer of contempt, or a basting of scandal, is about all the punishment which existing opinions and customs allow to be inflicted for the *crimes* of thinking freely and logically, and of acting out the honest thought.

Digitized by Google

Under the old faith, and the old powers of Church and State, the jail and the gallows would have had me, and many a nobler one, long ere this. Thanks to God for the intellectual freedom we enjoy in this favored land; thanks to him that the church can no longer enslave; thanks to him for the civil freedom which knows no creed; thanks, thanks, to him for the moral freedom which lets the tongue be true to God and fearless of man, in telling frankly what the eye has seen, the ear heard, and the heart conceived.

Our facts found their analogies in the Bible; and we express distinctly our faith, that the Bible-facts are true, that its wisdom is heavenly, that its power was inflowed to it from above, and still that its marvels were wrought, and its wisdom inspired, in conformity with universal laws, — laws which are still in force, and under which the departed can revisit earth.

The Rev. Charles Beecher, when reporting officially upon Spiritualism, said, "It is not enough that a theory can, by great effort, embrace the phenomena of clairvoyance, rhabdomancy, apparitions, oracles, haunted houses, rappings, &c.: it must also take in the facts of the Bible. It must give to the Bible its natural meaning; not explaining away, by false accommodation-principles, its demoniac possessions, its pythonesses, its laws, its history of the evoking of Samuel, and of the false prophets. Whatever physiological law accounts for odylic phenomena in all ages, will, in the end, inevitably carry itself through the

Digitized by Google

whole Bible. . . . If a theory be adopted everywhere else but in the Bible, excluding spiritual intervention by odylic channels *in toto*, and accounting for every thing physically, then will the covers of the Bible prove but pasteboard barriers. Such a theory will sweep its way through the Bible and its authority. . . . On the other hand, if the theory of spiritual intervention, through odylic channels, be accepted in the Bible, it cannot be shut up there."

This is common sense and sound philosophy. We accept the "theory of spiritual intervention, through odylic channels, in the Bible," and, of course, also in modern spirit-manifestation. The two stand or fall together. In advocating and defending the position that spirits come to us by natural law, we are advocating and defending the Bible. The miracles and inspiration of the Bible, as well as the repeated manifestations of disembodied intelligence in all ages, have a deeper foundation and a broader basis *in the nature of things*, than the science, reason, and theology of our times are accustomed to recognize.

What are the *usual and legitimate* effects of Spiritualism? Before we answer, let us make a few preliminary statements. One often finds it said, or at least implied, that Spiritualism does more harm than good, and that *therefore* it is not produced by spirits, and *cannot* imply any action of theirs. Such an inference is not legitimate. The *moral character* of agents may be proved by the good or harm they do or may do. The *effects* of Spiritualism may be properly used in answer to the question, whether the acting spirits

Digitized by Google

are good ones or bad ones; but the effects are *no answer* to the question, whether the agents in Spiritualism are embodied or disembodied. Prove, if you can, that all the actors in it are *bad*, and what follows? Why, this, — that Spiritualism should be shunned; but by no means does it prove that disembodied spirits cannot be its authors. Prove that the actors are *good*, and what follows? Why, this, — that the subject is worthy of favorable regard, but not that those actors come from the spheres above. The fact being suspected that spirits come, the moral character and influences of the acts witnessed cannot prove either that the authors are or are *not spirits*, but only that they are bad ones or good ones, or both, as the acts shall indicate.

The dangers, sufferings, privations, hardships, and permanent debility, of Dr. Kane, and the most of his companions, consequent upon their efforts to penetrate the ice-barred North, may be a good reason why we should not ourselves attempt, nor encourage others to attempt, to hold communion with the walrus and grisly bear; but cannot disprove the presence of the walrus and the bear where Kane went, nor the statement of William Morton, that he and Hans reached the shore of an open Polar Sea. Such a sea may exist without being of any *definable* use to man. It may exist, contrary to the supposed laws which require greater cold at eighty-five degrees than at seventy-five degrees north, — contrary to the deductions of science. Science may even deny its existence; but she cannot successfully demolish Morton's

Digitized by Google

testimony. She may assert that he was deluded or deceived, or that he lied; but her word will have less power to produce conviction than his, because he stood on the proper spot *to witness the fact.* Facts are the creator of science; and when the thing formed hastily attempts to demolish its creator, or the distinct and apparently honest testimony by which that creator's existence is proved, it will meet with signal and shameful defeat. Let the stoutest ship of science rush, "bows on," upon a heavy *iceberg of facts*, and it is *her own timbers* which must give way. Morton says he reached that Polar Sea: his words, as yet, are fair authority for that fact. Spirits say they reach the earth: their words, the words of thousands upon thousands of them, are part of the fair authority for this fact; and the words of as many thousand truthful men and women, that they have seen and heard the spirits, are another part.

Is it wise and useful to investigate Spiritualism, and yield at all to its influences? Who shall answer such an inquiry? Nearly every man *will;* but who is best qualified to reply, — those who can speak from *experience;* or those who are, at most, but external observers? I, a receiver of Spiritualism, can assert that its effects upon the heads and hearts and lives of those who embrace it are, in the main, highly salutary, and that most spiritualists will and do confirm my declaration. You, a rejecter of it, may assert that this faith unbalances the mind, depraves the heart, and unfolds itself in immorality; and that your own observations, and the general observation of the com-

Digitized by Google

munity, will sustain you in your position. If bare assertion be *all*, you and I may chase each other round and round in a circle for ever, and yet make no real advance. But that is *not all.* The bases of the assertion are proper items for use in the discussion. In my case, it rests partly upon inward *experience;* in your case, upon your outward *observation of another.* My position is the best for getting at *positive knowledge* of what is asserted; and therefore (our characters for truth and veracity being alike, and predilection on one side balancing prejudice on the other) the world will give more weight to my assertions than it can to yours. It does the like in other cases.

The mere outsider and looker-on at a Methodist camp-meeting may honestly conclude that such a gathering and its appendages, and also the faith which develops itself in the begetting and cherishing of such meetings, cannot fail to result in much debasement, indelicacy, and immorality. Perhaps all these evils are actually seen upon the surface and outside. The objector may hold a perfectly just and correct opinion; yet those *within* — the hearty believers, the true worshippers, the *genuine Methodists* — may not only believe, but *know*, that they themselves are made purer and more spiritually minded by their faith, and its peculiar outworkings at the camp-meetings. They see a different phase of Methodism from that at which the outsider looks. But who are the best judges of the true nature and influences of *genuine Methodism?* Most obviously, it is those who are *within the tent*, and receive it in its fulness and purity. The common

Digitized by Google

sense of the world adopts this answer; and it will do the same, eventually, in the case of Spiritualism.

Again, then, what are the *usual* and *legitimate* effects of Spiritualism? No one spiritualist has any authority to speak for others. Coincidence of faith among spiritualists, beyond a reception of the fact that the departed do communicate, is not required *by them.* Diversity of faith is expected, but unity of spirit is desired. There is no one leader, there is no band of leaders; and nothing of the kind is looked for, or admissible. The question can be answered here in behalf of one believer only. My experience has been considerable, and my observation not very limited nor careless. The following are a part of my conclusions: —

1st, That a large proportion of those who call themselves spiritualists believe that spirits come, just as they believe that two and two make four, that is, *intellectually*, and receive no moral influence at all directly from the faith itself. They believe it as they believe the facts of astronomy, geology, or the existence of a Polar Sea. Some require much and strong proof; while, with others, a little evidence is sufficient to produce an *intellectual* assent, and such assent makes them nominally spiritualists. Such persons, however, remain *morally* such as they had become amid the influences of home, of the pulpit, the Sunday-school, the day-school, and their associations with the world. Their new faith makes them marks for every observer, and their every act is often charged to the new faith; while really they are, in the main, only

Digitized by Google

showing what they had grown to be in the midst of a nominally Christian community. *Outwardly* they may become subjects of new moral and social influences. Many of them assemble in circles, meet new associates, resort to a new kind of *entertainment or excitement*, and will, of course, feel new influences, which may make them better, or may make them worse. On the whole, such influences are elevating, because there are very many pure and devout men and women among them, and meeting with them frequently, whose every look and word and act bespeaks the true philanthropist, and who feel that they can move among even "*publicans and sinners*" without contamination, but not without sowing good seed there. Common faith in spirit-presence gives the higher believers an opportunity to instruct the lower; and it is embraced even where circumstances are not congenial to refined taste. But germination and education are slow processes; and their results do not appear until after long-continued and patient waiting. The buried, as also the sprouting, seed is unseen; but the sower knows what and when he planted, and can predict the character of the future harvest better than another.

2d, There is a portion of the spiritualists who take the words through *any* medium, from any spirit, as true, and receive advice thence as being sound, and (without "trying the spirits") give way to their advice, — some to good deeds, and some to indulgences and acts, which, in the opinion of our community, the moral teachings of Christianity forbid; and they do this under a belief, confirmed by spirit-declarations,

Digitized by Google

that many things are sanctioned above which are condemned here. Some spirits *do* tempt to immorality. So do some *men*. My own observation gives the inference, that, in most cases where such temptations are successful, the yielding individuals have previously failed to conform, in heart and in *secret*, to the requirements of sound moral laws. *Congenial* spirits come, and their words find an inward response. The gospel, and public opinion, and the civil law, have perhaps restrained their hands in public heretofore, but have not tended to purify and strengthen the heart, nor restrain from *secret wickedness*. The evil has existed inwardly; and the only effect of Spiritualism there, is to make its receivers less careful to cloak their sins. As yet, how can the greater portion of spiritualists be much else than nominal or real Christians *scrutinized?* A Christian community gave them their education, principles, and habits. Some, when stripped, appear worse, and others better, than before. A general stripping off and throwing aside the garments of hypocrisy might, and probably would, startle the world, and yet might, in the end, be a public benefit. Some apparent evils do attend Spiritualism, as seen in a portion of its receivers; also some real ones, we apprehend, do occasionally result from perversion of it; and none lament this more, and none will pray and labor more earnestly for the uprooting of these evils, than the devout and hearty receivers of this faith. Belief that our most secret acts are or may be seen by finite intelligences is legitimately a worm which will gnaw at the roots of hypocrisy, and cause it to wither; and, as hypocrisy

Digitized by Google

withers, the heart may seem worse than we deemed it, without, in fact, being changed at all. Should such effects flow copiously from Spiritualism, they would give the philanthropic a clearer insight into the quality and extent of man's depravity, and consequently make them more competent to prescribe and apply the best remedies, and that, too, in the best way and most fitting time. This dark side may not be all *blackness*.

3d, The remainder, — and they are vastly more, proportionally and absolutely, than would have been needed to save Sodom, — the remainder believe with the *heart* as well as the head. They are, or are seeking to become, honest, earnest, true worshippers of God, and brothers among *all* who wear the human form. Some are wise and prudent: others are imprudent, having much more zeal than knowledge. Like the honest members of any religious sect or any political party, they exhibit a vast *variety* of character; yet it is to the character of this class as a whole, compared with the character they exhibited as a whole before they became spiritualists, that the world looks to determine the usual and legitimate effects of Spiritualism, so far as time and circumstances have yet permitted those effects to be unfolded. The full effects, of course, cannot be seen until some future generation shall be subjected to its influences from the cradle up to ripe manhood.

What, then, are the changes, if any, which Spiritualism has thus far wrought in those who embrace it with the *heart?* Varied, no doubt, and yet prevailingly similar, according to my observation. *All*, —

Digitized by Google

whether the Infidel, the orthodox Christian or the liberal Christian, — *all* exhibit a *tendency* to regard the Universal Father as *more fatherly towards all men*, Gentile as well as Jew, sinner as well as saint, Heathen as well as Christian, — a *tendency* to regard him as more fatherly and more impartial, both now and in all past ages, than their previous education had made him appear. Of course, they incline to go to him more lovingly and freely, and begin to feel a greater nearness to him. Unwonted cheerfulness and kindliness spring up in the heart at his felt presence, and the felt presence of his charitable angels. Love to man as *man* begins to expand and deepen, and become more active. Believers become more liberal in thought, and charitable in heart. Partition-walls begin to crumble, so that sectarianism and creed become less and less a barrier of access and of kind regard to *man*, be he high or low, Protestant or Catholic, Christian or Heathen, good or bad. Generally, the feelings become liberalized; the judgments become charitable; the actions become freer, less conformed to custom and fashion, and, of course, often obnoxious to the world's censure. The hearty spiritualist becomes less and less the slave of cramping society; asks less often and less earnestly, "What will the public say? what will the public think?" but does the things to which his impulses prompt, as a free child of his heavenly Father. Yet, loving that Father more than formerly, he changes into a nearer likeness to him; judges man on a broader and less partial basis; and becomes more calm, self-possessed, and forgiving, under insult, injury, and

Digitized by Google

abuse. Thus, though he act out his impulses with more freedom, those impulses themselves incline to the more generous and forgiving, the less selfish and retaliatory.

Creeds, as such, melt away. Creeds, as essential passports to heavenly joys, are ignored. The great natural and Christian doctrine, that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," is held to, as applied to man here, and to be applied to him in every future stage of his existence; and it is not his overt acts, nor the tenets of his creed, but it is the inner motives which prompt the acts, that constitute the seed. Love to God and love to man, sown and cultured inside or out of the pale of Christendom, will yield a heavenly harvest. The *tendency* of spiritualists is to views like these, whatever may have been their former faith. Spiritualism does liberalize the creed, and the action, and the motives to action; and though it wage no war, and stretch out no ruthless hand, yet, as it spreads, and does its legitimate work, it may undermine the walls of sectarianism, strip off from the simple gospel of Him who preached upon the Mount the monstrous and forbidding appendages which the intervening ages have added, and let each and every man see, that, "in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted of him."

Spiritualists, generally, do tend toward freer thought, freer and more kindly emotion, and freer expression of emotion in all the outward acts, than observers of the outside only of the cup or platter are ready to approve, and to more generosity than our selfish world

Digitized by Google

is ready to adopt. But that world is not their only teacher: the one *above* also sends instructors, who advise to the course which their pupils pursue, and embolden them to move forward with steady and firm step in their freer paths, *because* such paths lead most directly and safely to God, — to Him whose spirit gives *liberty*. The world cannot be made to comprehend that great familiarity and fraternal freedom in social manners, that hilarity and dancing even, that a *smiling* religious faith, that a moderated regard for ordinances and forms, and that cheerfulness in the midst of devotion and in times of bereavement, may be the legitimate results of comprehending and obeying Christianity as it comes in purity and power from the good Christians of various sects who are now reaping in heaven what they sowed on earth, and whose experience gives them eminent wisdom. Yet so it is. Truth comes, and makes her receiver *free*, — too free to be a satisfactory servant of man, but none too free for a good servant of God.

The foregoing remarks, in answer to the question as to the general and legitimate effects of Spiritualism, exhibit some of the conclusions of a pretty extensive observation, and are as full as this short treatise admits. But I feel unwilling to bring this little work to a close without adding a few pages which shall exhibit more of personal experience.

Having felt the obligations of religion from very early childhood up to the present hour; having, through all life's phases of trial and of ease, of sorrows and of joys, been a believer in God, in revelation, and in im-

Digitized by Google

mortality; having wished to be an habitual doer of God's word; having been from early manhood very free from slavery to creed or sect; having been long used to find God in the outward universe and in my own self, as well as in the Bible; and having felt free to listen to his voice, wherever uttered, and to learn his will, however promulgated, — it is probable that less change has occurred in my own belief, and in the modes of its expression, than most others have experienced as consequences of embracing Spiritualism. That faith has wrought in me little, if any, change in personal habits; little in my principles, and modes of doing business with the world; little in my relations to the church; little in forms of domestic worship; little in any aspect in which the world views me, excepting in the single particular, that this subject now consumes considerable of my time and means which were formerly devoted to other matters. My creed, such as it was when my calling placed me in the pulpit, has undergone no abatement, unless the *mode* or the immediate *authorship* of inspiration and of miracle-working be a part of a Christian creed. Inspiration and miracles are themselves believed in by me more intelligently and satisfactorily now than in former times.

The creed stands without abatements, but not without addition. A revived and living "ministry of angels" is now believed in. Spirits come to us as surely as they did to disciples and apostles of old. Seers now astonish and gladden us by descriptions of their "vision of angels." This item, and the much

Digitized by Google

that it involves, is *added* to my former creed. The departed return; parents, brothers, sisters, and friends come and rekindle, and keep vividly alive, the flames of love and sympathy which their former relations and deeds had fed on my heart's hearth-stone. The wise and good out of all past ages, and from every land, come, and give lessons of wisdom and sound philosophy; the degraded and fiendish come, or are brought, that we may help these "spirits in prison" to their deliverance; the desponding come for encouragement from our lips. From every quarter, and of every grade, spirits come; some to help us, others to get such assistance as we can render them: some for our gratification; others for their own pleasure, amusement, or benefit. They come unfolding the laws of spirit-life to the careful observer, and teaching more or less directly, and in widely varied modes, the processes of wise preparation for usefulness and joy in the life above. The fundamental principles of Christianity, the beauty and holiness of the doctrines and life of Jesus, the facts that we shall reap as we have sown, that judgment will be according to our deeds, that love to God and love to man should be in the impulse to every act of life, that love towards the unseen Father is to be manifested by deeds of kindness to the brother who is seen, — these, and other great truths which the gospel contains, are repreached, often with striking illustration and power, by those teachers returned from the mansions in the Father's house above. They come not to destroy, but to fulfil, to illustrate, to enforce, the gospel, and the truths of natural religion. They

Digitized by Google

are welcome friends, wise and persuasive teachers, *experienced* guides, and efficient helpers.

When faith in the ministry of angels has become firm; when it seems like *knowledge*, and works like knowledge upon the judgment and the affections; and when processes of trying the spirits have become familiar, — then the departed may wisely be applied to, as joint counsellors with men and one's own good sense, in regard to the healing of disease, preservation of health, regulation of the diet, personal habits and indulgences; in regard to many of the complicated and difficult questions which arise in regard to the real motives and designs of the men and women with whom we become associated in life; also in regard to our duties generally, to both God and man. There is no one field of human duty where they fail to come as our advisers and assistants. Sensible of this, the future becomes to man as an ever-present reality. Then one feels — by day and by night, abroad and at home, on the housetop and in the closet — that the eyes of the pure and good look upon his *heart;* and he feels, too, that unless heavenly purity and love rule within himself, and blossom out in active beneficence, then sadness will shade the brows of the loving ones above, who surround and help him. There is restraining, cheering, and uplifting power in this faith.

Undoubting trust in the presence of our departed friends, as angels from the brighter land to this, keeps the next life and its great interests habitually present to the mind. Their prevailing joy and gladness make

Digitized by Google

that future life seem cheerful, and to be welcomed when the fitting time to enter upon it shall come; and also make cheerfulness, hope, and loving affections, not less than Bible-reading, stated acts of worship, and specific creed, the seeds of *future* enjoyment. Heavenly help is experienced to lift the earth-prone soul towards realms above. This one feels more sensibly, and is more strongly moved by, when he carries within himself a consciousness that watchful and loving angels are near at hand, and cognizant of his needs, than when the departed seem to him but a something, he knows not *what*, he knows not *where*.

Helpers they are, between man and God, to teach and help the soul to rise in steady progression, ever on and up, towards the Highest, the Holy One, the Father of angels and of men. At the communion-table; in every season of prayer; in every devotional, in every beneficent work, — they, as sharers in the acts, give depth to pious gratitude, warmth and vitality to devotion, and strength to the working hand. Aided by their presence, and by inflowings from them, the heart expands, love grows more all-embracing, charity enlarges her mantle, sympathy flows out more widely, and one becomes more a growing and helpful child of God. In the deepest recesses of the heart, which the outward eye cannot explore, and where the mere observer can never enter, — there, where experience alone can be witness, — there, pure Spiritualism applies, with new skill and power and efficacy, the fundamental teachings of Christ, and does its legitimate and uplifting work. And it is because

Digitized by Google

experience has brought them to a knowledge of its celestial workings *in the heart*, that thousands labor, and will labor on, through evil report and good report, to implant Spiritualism in the broad field of the world, and enable their brethren to taste the fruit of this tree of life. They, a host of them, with hearts filled nearer to fulness than ever before with grateful piety and living philanthropy, — filled by inflowings from hovering angel-bands, — will work on, praying, toiling, hoping, for a universal extension of that faith which is able to lift mortals up, and bring angels down, to a happy and blissful communing.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

89079714275

b89079714275a

Date Due

DEC 2 '71			
JA 6 '74			
MA 29 '74			
SE 5 '88			

Demco 38-297

Digitized by Google

Photomount
Pamphlet
Binder
Gaylord Bros., Inc.
Makers
Syracuse, N. Y.
PAT. JAN 21, 1908

Digitized by Google

B89079714275
B89079714275A

Digitized by Google